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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the status of library services and reading in Mali. Following an introductory section that provides miscellaneous data about Mali, the first section of the paper describes the development of libraries in Mali before the colonial period, during the colonial period, and during the independence period up to 1977. The libraries of the public reading network operation are highlighted, including library collections (i.e., books, audio-documents, and oral tradition gathering), use, and the library-wagon. The next two sections address secondary/advanced and primary school libraries. The national languages libraries are covered in the fifth section. The sixth section discusses the rural audio-libraries, including results of an analysis of benefits and problems. Actions to encourage reading and creating are described in the next section, including workshops on writing and illustrating children's books, the creation of the Bamako Editorial Committee, publication of cloth-binding books, an annual book fair, and the Autograph Project to finance authors and editors. The ninth section considers reading difficulties, including illiteracy and socio-economic factors, as well as the weakness of local publishers and the book distribution network. The final section addresses prospects, focusing on a project on book and reading assistance in Mali. (MES)

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Services of libraries and reading in Mali**Fatogoma DIAKITE***Public Reading Operation
Bamako, Mali***Paper****INTRODUCTION : MISCELLANEOUS DATA ABOUT MALI**

Mali is a large continental country of 1 241 238 km² located in the Center of West Africa, just in the sahelian area. The Mali Republic was born on September 22nd 1960, after more than 70 years of French colonization and an aborted attempt to build a Mali Federation in the Senegal in 1959.

The land is divided into eight administrative regions (Kayes, Koulikoro, Sikasso, Ségou, Mopti, Tombouctou, Gao and Kidal), and one district, Bamako (the population of which was estimated to 916 000 inhabitants in 1995), 49 circles, 280 administrative districts, 10 000 villages and nomadic groups. Since 1991 a democratic state has been settled in Mali, at this time a decentralization politic is worked up.

According to the results of the 1995-1996 second General Population and Housing Census (GPHC) and the Demographics and Health statistic (DHS - Mali), the resident population in Mali came to 7 696 348 inhabitants in 1987 and 9 500 000 in 1997. The rate of increase through a century was 2%, which means Mali is an emigration land. The population annual rate of increase is 3.7%. That increase is due to a rough rate of high natality 50% and to a death rate of 13%. A high level of reproduction rate remains (6,7 children per woman).

French is the official language. 572 916 pupils and students are taught in French. 10% of the population masters French (about 9 500 000 pepople); 20% of the population, that is to say 1 900 000 people is studying French.

The following figures show Mali that is at least part of the third world country : 49% of the

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population is less than 15 years old.. In 1995/96, the rough percentage of children in full time education was 39,1%, and only 8% of them finish the fundamental primary education (6 years).

Conclusion is Mali is a young population being taught to read and write. Land of oral and still strong tradition, overall in rural area. The main spoken languages are :

Bambara-Malinké-Kasonké, Peul, Sonraï, sénoufo, Dogon, Minianka, Bobo and Tamasheq.

I. DEVELOPMENT OF LIBRARIES IN MALI

BEFORE THE COLONIAL PERIOD

Today, in a general way, it is difficult to delimit exactly the history of libraries in Mali. It is only from the history of strong islamized old cities like Djenné, Tombouctou and Gao, than important arabic documents were owned by scholars, more often manuscripts . As part of protection and promotion of these manuscripts, the Center of Documentation and Research Ahmed Baba in Tombouctou was founded in 1976. It's a public service in charge of collecting and purchasing important manuscripts in arabic language in Tombouctou and Gao areas.

COLONIAL PERIOD AND FIRST LIBRARIES

According to the Public Record Office of Mali some libraries are mentioned at the colonial period, one of them was the Nioro-du-Sahel Library, founded in october 14th 1904, called the Nioro du Sahel library ; only french residents in Nioro belonging to the club called "French Circle" could go in.

In 1916, a total stock of 30 to 100 books per library was counted in the circle libraries inventory of high-Senegal-Niger ; mainly law works, books about the colonial conquest, monographs about life in the administrative district, agriculture and breeding works and very few novels.

Only civil servants could go to these libraries.

It's only in 1923 a "mobile teaching library" was created by a local decree of the French speaking Soudan's Governor. Teachers in charge could consult documentary and technical works about colony and its occupation and, besides, some scholar books. In April 16th 1940 that mobile library contained 1958 books.

Later on, some libraries were created in some districts by missionaries. In any case, children books were in few number and , when existing, it was religious books or scholar books.

INDEPENDANCE PERIOD UP TO 1977

From 1960 (Independance of Mali) many public libraries were founded within the foreign cultural centers.

They were all in Bamako, the capital. They are the French cultural center, the American cultural center, the USSR cultural center and the Djoliba library, from the catholic parish.

The public libraries of the cultural centers, which could develop the interest of the whole population in reading were all centralized in the capital. However, we must admit that about 60% of the secondary school pupils and almost all the students, live in the capital. So 80% of the total population located in the rural areas were not concerned by these libraries.

From 1977, the French cooperation, have put stress on creation and development of these libraries.

II. THE LIBRARIES OF THE PUBLIC READING NETWORK OPERATION

Mali has solved the problem of spreading information through rural areas by founding a public reading network operation run by the Public Reading Operation.

Created in 1977, the Public Reading Franco-Malian Operation is the most important national structure of libraries in French speaking Africa ; its target is to promote a politic of decentralized reading by the creation, in connexion with the local communities, of :

- 52 public-reading libraries in the district of Bamako and the circles all over the country.
- 1 library-wagon, supplying regularly 10 railway stations between Bamako and the border with Senegal,
- 1 children-library in Bamako,
- 6 Centers of reading and activities for children in Bamako districts.

These libraries contain 1 500 to 2 500 books , in addition to some 10 000 to 15 000 books coming from the twinning with French cities.

In addition to a training in library science, librarians are initiated to organization of activities, to gathering of the oral tradition tapes for a lending "bandothèque" (magnetic tape) in national languages, to preserve books in binding them, to the video-projection skills.

A tape recorder has been allowed to each library, and a 16mm projector has been provided to the 7 unities in the chief-towns district, to preserve the oral tradition.

The process was to give, from the beginning, local authorities of libraries, a sense of responsibility, in defining the project, thinking about its usefulness. People in charge of the Public reading Operation want to have only a role of careful and kind observers mainly in the further education field. People in charge facing their responsibilities, solutions has been found by the Public Reading Operation as a national project coordinators and technicians.

LIBRARIES COLLECTION AND ITS EXPLOITATION BY THE PUBLIC

Books

At this time, from the budget of the Central, about 145 000 books are stocked in all the public reading network libraries : litterature 1/3, documentaries 1/3, books for children 1/3.

As much as possible national languages are there (about 1 000 books for 20 titles , this little figure is explained by the rarity of national languages books in the editorial field) and some arabic language books (550 books for 10 titles).

Through the monthly report, librarians are invited to communicate buying proposals written by readers in suggestions books..

It appeared quickly books ordered by librarians were only adults ones (apart Tintin). Taking into account inertia due to delays, transport, general planning, the rebalancing of the general collection of libraries, specially for children, has taken several years and, since 1985, it has become visible. After that children books ordered were mainly documentaries.

In a general way books have been ordered in 25 copies for the whole network and endowments made in such a way that 2 libraries from neighboured circles, can have different works in part of their collection, so that works can be lent between libraries, which increase the local possibility of reading.

Collection books have been made in order to have the majority of readers' needs and tastes satisfied : reference books, dictionnaires, encyclopedia, curricula programmes, African collection, technical and scientific books, national and Arabic languages, recreation, cartoons, children albums.

Equiped in Bamako, books are systematically differentiated. The method is very simple and convenient for the public and librarians as well: a yellow mark for an easy reading book, for all people ; a green one, not for children ; a red one, not for home-lending.

Documentary works have been classified from the Dewey decimal classification shortened in three-figure number, one letter « A » for albums, « C » for tales, and « R » for novels.

For some years, and through the French cities twinning, the Central is thriving about

10 000 and 15 000 more books. They are marked by the local librarians, their equipment being furnished by the Central Library.

An average of 10% lost books have been noticed since the foundation of libraries.

Libraries have taken out a subscription for 12 Malian magazines and newspapers, African ones, French ones or European ones : « Jamana, Grin-grin, Jeune Afrique, Amina, J'aime lire, Je bouquine, Notre Librairie, Le courrier ACP, Planètes-Jeunes, Planète-Enfants ».

On the first year of libraries opening, the Central asked librarians not to lend books, but to allow people to use libraries only as a reference libraries. The goal was to avoid the lost of books and to get the public used to handle and respect books.

From the second year, home lending was allowed, but a subscription was wanted : a symbolic sum fixed by the Local Commission of Cultural Heritage Saving. Moreover, for children, a written undertaking is needed from parents or school-director.

Is subscription a handicap for reading ?

In our opinion, it has more advantages than disadvantages : it makes reader responsible and brings him on the library running ; financial effort being, as well-known, a supplementary motivation. The subscription is from 50 CFA F to 1 000 CFA F/a year, depending on libraries.

Audio-documents and oral tradition gathering

Illiterate users are not forgotten. They can be directly reached by the audio-visual ways, mainly tape-recorder. So the network librarians have been in charge to collect oral tradition, each library being equiped with tape-recorder and tapes. That activity has allowed to collect for libraries users from the essential elements of the oral cultural heritage (local stories, tales, guessing games, traditional technology, traditional pharmacopeia), and to organize collective listenings followed by discussions indoor.

351 tapes of 60 minutes each were collected between 1981 and 1998.

In each locality the gathering tradition has carried away a « bandotheque » in national language, parallel to book collection.

It can also be made in a reading way as that was the case for the French-Bambara bilingual book of tales « La pierre barbue » published in 1989, in cooperation with the city of Angers (France) .

Libraries using

With 218 000 users in 1997 in the libraries of circles (administrative territorial division), impact on clients was proved. Youth is representing 54 % of the same total, and boys 68 % of the general public. The adults represent 46 % and men 81,5% of the general public. A sensible increase, being now stable, in women frequentation must be noted, 10 % in 1979 and 18,5% in 1993, maybe because of a new women magazine called « Amina » very popular and recently given in libraries.

In the same libraries, children represent 37 % in the field of lending : 50 000 lendings at the same time. These numbers don't reflect by far the reality because the young are not registered in many libraries and are not entitled to borrow books. They are only admitted to read indoor.

The library-wagon

The railway station joining Bamako to the Senegal border has given the opportunity to the Public Reading Operation, to settle 11 books-deposit along the railway : Dio, Négala, Kassaro, Sébékoro, Oualia, Toukoto, Mahina, Diamou, Samé-Ouolof, Samé-CAA and Ambidedi. These localities are inhabited by 1 000 to 4 000 people.

A first library-wagon worked four times a year from october 1980 to November 1985. For a lack of security, the wagon has been off, being not any more adapted to the new locomotives (10 tons). Agents in charge of the Public reading Operation have kept on assuming the renewal of books in travelling by train once a quarter with 2 books trunks.

In 1995, the Public Reading Operation received as a donation a better adapted new library-wagon (40 tons). This new wagon contains 3 000 books and 300 video-tapes. It stays for 2 days in each visited locality, so the books-deposit is renewed, video projections held and meetings organized with the local commissions. The library wagon has a solar-energy equipment.

During 1997, 848 readers registered who lent 1853 lent books, 4665 people read on board of the wagon and 14 250 people were registered by the library wagon for the screening..

In 1984, the National Education Department, aware of the role played by the Public Reading Operation (in creation and activities of a network libraries all over the country), asked for the assistance of the team of Public Reading Operation to organize or reorganize the secondary and advanced school-libraries. Libraries in fundamental schools (primary education) and libraries in national languages (since 1996) have been also technically supported, notably in trainings, by the Public reading Operation.

III. THE SECONDARY AND ADVANCED SCHOOLS LIBRARIES

They had to create a scholar and academic section within the Public reading Operation to handle these libraries.

About 1 500 books have been provided to each library in 36 secondary or technical schools, and more than 11 000 books to the higher education libraries. Librarians have been trained annually by the Public reading operation in Bamako and 7 high-schools librarians have been sent to the archivists and documentalists and librarians' school in Dakar (EBAD).

IV. THE PRIMARY SCHOOLS LIBRARIES

The National Education Administration and its Fundamental teaching Structure, which provides education to 574 968 pupils from 7 to 13 years old in the junior classes and 78 059 pupils from 14 to 16 years old in the senior classes, is part of the structure encouraging young people from 7 to 16 years old to read.

In order to promote reading in fundamental schools, the Minister for Basic Education has decided to open a library in each of them (ancient and recent ones). So, in 1996, they created a department within the Ministry in order to found 10 experimental libraries in the schools of Koniakary, Ségala, in the Kayes area, Niéna and Kléla in the Sikasso area, Niono in the Ségou area, Dia, Hombori and Sévaré in the Mopti area, Yélékébougou in the Koulikoro area and Torokorobougou in the District of Bamako area. Each library was given 250 books. Though settled in schools, these libraries are opened to the whole village population.

The Public Reading Operation was to be a technical adviser and educator. The Ministry of Education employees and the 10 librarians were trained in handling library and in children activities.

V. THE NATIONAL LANGUAGES LIBRARIES

In order to find a quick solution to the rural population further education and information problems, the Mali Government has initiated the creation of specific information centers called « libraries in national languages ».

They are centers of reference, information and events opened to the whole population (youths, adults), newly-taught to read and write, researchers, whose collections in different materials (printed books, tapes) are in national languages, which will allow to spread each of them written and taped as well. These centers, which in reality don't teach the population to read and write, will also spread around the rural area messages about the way to change and improve the rural way of life in the agricultural production, environmental protection, welfare and health, breeding, scientific and technical information fields.

The aim is to promote the rural development within an information system allowing the populations to access to the up to date and traditional knowledge in their own languages and to upgrade the national languages.

The first national languages library was inaugurated in Dioïla in October 29th 1996, in presence of Mr Jean-Louis Roy, General Secretary of the Cultural and Technical Cooperation Agency (ACCT) and of Mr Adame Samassekou, Minister for Basic Education. These libraries are financed by ACCT.

Ten future libraries located in the different linguistic areas of the country are concerned by this programme : library in Bobo language in Tominian, Fulfude language in Mopti, Bozo language in Djenné, Dogon language in Bandiagara, Tamashek language in Kidal, Senoufo language in Sikasso, Minianka language in Koutiala, Soninké language in Nioro-du-Sahel and Sonrai language in Gao.

Today 5 out of the 10 libraries planned are opened. Each library has at its disposal :

- a 80 m² floor space premises, implemented on a 750 m² piece of land,
- in the original documentary collection around 700 books,
- a solar energy equipment,
- a computer and a photocopier,
- a dictaphone and ventilators.

So, 6 librarians have been trained by the Public Reading Operation in library management and automated system . In each locality librarians are supported by the whole organization, through notably the helpful channel of the Local Commission for Cultural Heritage Protection, in order to maintain and to manage the library and its activities.

VI. THE RURAL AUDIO-LIBRARIES

This new type of libraries allows traditional oral population to be involved in the country development and to access to the modern knowledge. Since 1982 this target has been developed by the Malian Department of Culture and the U.N. Program of Development (U.N.P.D.) and Research Center for International Development (R.C.I.D. Canadian organization).

The audio-libraries are settled in 146 villages scattered in four linguistic socio-cultural Malian areas (Bambara, Peul, Kasonké, Tamasheq). A central audio-library located in Bamako coordinates the network activities. Printed books are replaced by tapes. As they have recorded in national languages, only a cassette player is needed to be informed.

In the Malian villages, each family owns at least one or several radio-cassette player. People holding the traditional knowledge in the villages are invited to record what they know and put it at the audio-library disposal.

Since the rural audio-library creation 1 156 tapes in total have been produced. The concerned matters are agriculture (improvement of land, protection of seeds, early fruit and vegetables farming, market gardening) ; breeding (animal health, nutrition) ; public health, hygiene, medicine and traditional pharmacopeia, protection of environment (fight against bush fires, reforestation, bulding of council houses) ; communal development (Realization of tracks and little embankments, sinking, etc..) local history, tales, legends, etc..

The audio librarian in charge of this kind of library, appointed by the villagers by the « local Committee of oral knowledge », handle his unit and lends tapes. To build auditorium and special equipment is not needed. People will be able to listen at the village place, under the shadow of the discussion-tree or in any other place. Being very movable, the audio-library can touch populations very easily.

Though being part of the collective memory, oral tradition can disappear : « the manuscript old man » being unique and becoming more and more rare. So the collected traditional knowledge is copied by the central audio-library. After being pedagogically tape edited by the Central audio-library, the tapes are sent back to the villagers. Transcriptions are published. They are the « News from rural audio libraries » booklets in Peul and Bambara , for people newly trained to read and write.

RESULTS ANALYSIS

The ains of the missions of evaluation are : to determine and to estimate the results and their impact in order to identify the socio-economic changes for the rural poplations. They have been conducted by the Administration on an area sampling of about 20 villages.

Benefits

- A new behaviour in the populations' habits has been carried on by the program, notably in the public health and hygiene, human relationship and agriculture fields.
- Populations have been well trained by the Program on topic concerning the domains of human and animal health. Through historic traditions, monographs of villages, tales and legends, populations have got to be aware of the existence of a common cultural stock and to know in which way they are different one from an other.
- More and more in the villages audio-libraries are settled, the countrymen being penniless to buy pharmaceutical products, are using trditional pharmacopeia products collected and spread around by tapes.
- The audio-library is also used to inform populations about the district administration. The N.G.O., playing directly part in the villages' life, uses this structure to send their

messages as part of the community development.

Problems

- The listening and recording equipment (radio-cassette) though being correctly preserved in a lot of villages, was not always good enough to be a work instrument overall for the first settled audio-libraries of the villages.
- The program has not been fully efficient in the relationship with the technical services and development organizations due to the lack of permanent contact and presence of the research and demonstrators workers, and overall due to numerous changes both in the public administration services and in the development programs. The head departments having been frequently changed after the events of March 1991 did not allow the National Audio Library Committee to be dynamic.
- Because of the lack of appointed transcribers the Government could not put at the disposal of the Program, the transcription and the publication of oral tradition themes. Nevertheless one booklet (two planned) has been made.
- The audio library method has been slowed down mainly by the chosen civil servants. As they didn't feel their career was depending on that task, they were not deeply involved in.

The audio libraries, in a certain extent, can prove how limited is the oral method and, consequently, push the illiterates to learn writing.

VIII. PROGRAM OF THE ACTIONS TO ENCOURAGE READING AND CREATING

The writing and illustrating workshops of children's books in Bamako :

The first work-group (the one of 1992) was international and gathered together 29 people from 10 african countries. Born thanks to « The International Union for Books board for young » (IBBY) and organized by the Public Reading Operation, its goals were to improve the skills of writers and illustrators of books for children to check their promotion in Mali and other African countries, as well as to fortify the interprofessional cooperation between publishers, writers, illustrators and other groups in the field of children's Books. This workshop was also supposed to contribute to bring out the interest of the national and sub-regional institutions to children's literature promotion in adopting adequate conditions 5 models of the 10 ones made during this workshop adopted by publishers in Mali and in France (co-edition).

The 1993, 1995 and 1996 workshops organized by the Bamako Editorial Committee were national. They allowed to bring out 10 new projects for children's books, 2 were in national languages.

The Bamako Editorial Committee (CEBA)

The final resolutions of the first workshop of children's books literature and illustration allowed the creation of the CEBA, notably ruled by people trained in 1992 and officials with different status in charge of children's books and in reading : its main target is to contribute to the birth of an African children's literature and to promote local edition, notably in national languages (translation training from Bamana to French and from French to Bamana : 1997-1998).

The cloth-binding books

The first cloth-binding book was edited in June 1993 : it's a cloth binding book in 26 pages, to have children alphabet (edition of 6 000 copies distributed by CEBA : out of print). A second cloth binding book was published by CEBA in 1995 : alphabetisation method in Bamanan language in 35 pages (edition of 6 000 copies : out of print)

The FOLIMA

Established in 1979, the FOLIMA (Malian Book Fair) used to be organized yearly in Bamako till 1992. Books were allowed to be sold free of Taxes, which is important in a third world country where population can't afford expensive books. That event, which used to be successful, is no longer held. Today , as far as books are concerned ,only remains « temps des livres », an event organized by the French cooperation ; it is not so attractive for the public and it doesn't encourage booksellers who have not the opportunity to sell. The matter is the introduction of authors and reading meetings...

The Autograph Project

In April 1993, to help Malian publishers in their works, Canada through OCED, finalized an « Autograph » project. The project was to finance authors and editors, in a first step at 100%, in a second at 50% (printing was only concerned). The aim was to help some publishers like Jamana, la Sahelienne, la Ruche aux livres and le Figuier to « take off ». But it didn't work, and only le Figuier had the opportunity to publish its first children's albums.

Today the « autograph » program is off, without having fully reached its aims.

IX. DIFFICULTIES TO READING

Illiteracy and socio economic factors

In spite of the efforts made to train people to read and write and to provide education for children, many of them can't have access to books.

Since culture is mainly oral and particularly turned to collectivity, it's difficult to integrate the lonely act of reading. Moreover, when they take interest in books, their taste of living remains a considerable obstacle.

Weakness of the local edition

Created during the 1960th, under the government of the First Republic Government, the Malian Popular Edition, first Malian publishing house, have been progressively replaced by a dozen of private structures, all located in Bamako. They were to be confronted with problems of training, distribution and promotion. Very few of them produce catalogues, their books are seldom advertised. We can notice through a very limited edition policy, a very limited print run and generally a poor quality products.

Only 3 publishing houses can so be called :

Jamana, very diversified literary output, 80 titles in catalogues, but which has very considerable economic problems.

Donniya, born in 1996, which offers 16 miscellaneous titles, but- which works partly with expatriate staff and authors.

Le Figuier, created in 1997 by the writer Moussa Konaté, which has already issued 26 general or children's literature, in French and in Bamanan.

The others, after having issued up 3 or 10 books, have not offered anything new for many

years, though they always pretend being publishers.

At last, the Malian classics birth which, in co-edition with Nema and supported by the African classics (Versailles), are going to issue school books and extracurricular to Mali and sub-region countries.

We must also notice that authors and illustrators are suffering from a lack of consideration, and nothing is done to stimulate them, to encourage them to produce more and to become better, such as literary prizes to the best, grant or study tours.

Weakness of a general books distribution network

Library, stationery and even hardware business are often gathered together. This field has many difficulties. A dozen of libraries exist in Bamako : some are specialized in academic and school books and subsidized by the Plus Program (Lipage, Publimage, Librairie d'Afrique), two general libraries at the Hotel de l'Amitié and at the Grand Hôtel, well stocked but expensive, are reserved for casual trade or well off people, the others can generally subsist on their stationery department.

We can also notice the informal « street market » competition, with their second hand, often very cheap, books (a lot of school books) from a doubtful origin. In any case, it's difficult to choose between books edited in France, very expensive, due to transport and custom duties, and books edited locally ; often not interesting and not so attractive.

In the regional capitals, rather than real bookshops, they are stationers selling some books, notably in Kayes, Sikasso, Tombouctou and Koulikoro.

Fortunately, as far as editors and bookshops as well are concerned, institutional orders are an important part of the total sales (sometimes up to 70 %).

As often as possible, the Public reading Operation contact the publishers and, for some orders, the local bookshops.

X. PROSPECTS :

1. Maaya

Considering that the book and the reading constitute an important part of the general development, the National Meeting about Culture and Tourism or « MAAYA » which took place in Bamako in November 1997, under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism has undertaken a national policy to culture and tourism topics. This policy was approved by the Government Cabinet in october 14th 1998. The Importance of promoting all the chain of books has been stressed, literary creation, edition, bookshops, libraries.

2. The project « Book and reading assistance in Mali »

The Malian Department of Culture asked the French Mission for Cooperation and Cultural Operations in Octobrer 1998, to be involved in a project called « Book and reading assistance in Mali ». The target is to reinforce what was established by the Public Reading Operation, to take into consideration private libraries « reliable » (denominational or associative) and, at the same time, to support editors and bookshops alike in order to have a good literary output.

2. 1 Content of the project

2.1.1 The libraries

At the national level

- In order to develop the existing libraries and to create new ones, youth's books particularly will be ordered, (reference works, literature, documentaries). Subscriptions to magazines will complete this stock.
- In the field of the secondary education, the aim is to create real structures to a better information, from the present school libraries, allowing home-lending or consultation indoors, through printed forms and multimedia as well, which means computerization of the documentary stock.. Pupil will be able to have good stools to develop his knowledge and to go further into specific matters. The youth will be well supervised. The supervisory staff will be able to help the youth in their studies and to promote reading.
- Libraries which fit with some criteria entered in a specific book, will be privileged.
- A census of private libraries (denominational or associative) will be done. Only will be supported with books and training those which will guarantee their reliability in signing a Chart. They could create an association gathering them and requiring the respect of some criteria.
- The Public Reading head quarter will keep on training people in library orientation, in resources center management, activities, documentary and binding. At the same time they will organize training cycle with the approval of the Public Administration. Initial education in France or in Dakar on 3 levels ; graduate levels, will be part of the project.
- If possible, the main head quarter in connexion with cities or twin libraries will provide systematically adequate lists of adequate books to Malian readers.
- At last, the main Center will assist editors and bookshops to ameliorate production and issuing of book in Mali and will encourage them to be well structured., to produce and to issue, in accordance with qualities and viability standards.

At regional level

As part of the decentralization which is presently done in Mali, the local collectivities should look after :

- The maintenance of premises and furnitures of the present network,
- Its good working (water, electricity)
- Librarians (municipal staff) nomination and salary
- Creation of a management Committee.

The Public reading Libraries of the regional capitals will be modernized to become reference places according to the politic of decentralization of the Malian Government.

2.1.2 Edition -bookshops

With the collaboration of OMEL (Malian Organization of Book Publishers) the aim of the plan will be :

- To provide education and training to the staff edition (with France-Edition) : publishing house organization, reading, Committee activities, correction of manuscripts, form filling, computer graphics, management, co-edition, distribution and marketing.
- Journalists' trainings in literary review in order to promote book in the media (trainings in France, Senegal and Ivory Cost)

- Assistance to literary broadcast on TV and radio.
- Just published lay out in a literay field (print press)
- Creation of an annual literary competition (novels, cartoons, children's books) which in parallel with the writing workshops, allows new talents to emerge,
- Assistance to cultural book events (fairs, exhibitions, book fairs).

With the collaboration of the Association of Malian booksellers in order to allow the book trade to the best skills and to thrive, the plan will be :

- To train booksellers with the assistance of France Edition,
- To make easy access of bookshops to recent publications in furnishing catalogues and topic lists and in allowing to make access to the Electre-Biblio CDROM at the Public Reading Operation,
- To order a lot, as often as possible, books for the network libraries at the local bookshops while paying particular attention to buy national and African works,
- To push to create bookshops in the regional capitals (branch bookshops of Bamako).

4. Expected impact of the project

The project which origin is a strong need in books and a good achievement by the Public reading Operation in the libraries settlement, should have positive effects in several aspects :

- Reinforcement of reading among the whole population and particularly among youth, which will contribute to raise the level of training and will be so part of the development of the
- country,Improvmnt of access to culture by women. This improvment is first bound to the raising rate of education among girls. The project, without being conclusive, will contribute about it, in moving closer populations.
- Gradual control of the libraries network and of the documentary center by the Malian Government, the decentralized collectivity and the private institutions of libraries under local administration,
- The full computerization of the documentation centers and of the higher education libraries will allow scientific search in Mali to be known and recognized, mainly the grey literature (dissertation, thesis, studies, reports) which is not part of the traditional edition circuit.
- Setting up a publishers and booksellers network.

This job turning professional, will allow a better selection from books offered to public, a better fund management, a better cost-effectiveness. The smooth running of this network will be only good to the booksellers setting up in the regions.

CONCLUSION

An already old network (20 years) in public reading libraries and also schools and academic ones, has settled and developped the love reading in Mali.

The new prospects mentioned here above will answer the ever increasing need of the

population for reading and research.

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